

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-6, 8 and 9 are presently pending in this application, Claim 7 having been canceled and Claims 1-3, 6 and 8 having been amended by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 2, 3 and 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for being indefinite; Claims 1, 4 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Ambasz (U.S. Patent 3,982,785); and Claims 2, 3, 5, 6 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ambasz. However, Claim 7 was indicated as including allowable subject matter.

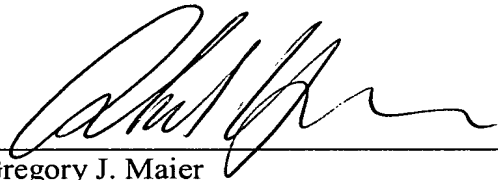
First, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication that Claim 7 includes allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter recited in Claim 7, Claim 7 has been canceled and Claims 1-3, 6 and 8 have been amended to clarify the subject matters recited therein. Thus, Claims 1-6, 8 and 9 are believed to be in compliance with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. If, however, the Examiner disagrees, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned who will be happy to work in a joint effort to derive mutually satisfactory claim language and expedite the prosecution of the present application.

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Reply to Office Action of November 17, 2003

In light of the prior indication of allowable subject matter and in view of the amendments presented above, no further issues are believed to be outstanding, and thus the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request an early and favorable action to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gregory J. Maier', is written over a horizontal line.

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